

CEEMEA Week Ahead: CNB Rate Decision, South Africa CPI

13 March 2026, by Hiren Ravji and Krzysztof Kruk

Executive Summary:

- South Africa’s headline CPI may have eased closer to the SARB’s +3% YY target in February, as a further drop in fuel prices offered some relief. However, the outbreak of the Iran war reduces the relevance of the data, with the spike in the prices of energy carriers expected to show in the data in the coming months.
- The Czech National Bank is widely expected to keep the two-week repo rate unchanged at 3.50%, after several Bank Board members urged caution in addressing the fallout from the Iran war.
- In Russia, most analysts expect the CBR to lower its key interest rate by 50bps to 15%, despite the uncertainty caused by the conflict in the Middle East. Weekly inflation data look relatively benign and confirm that the January price surge due to tax hikes was temporary.

Contents

Upcoming Data Releases/Political Events:2

Bond Auctions:4

Notable Option Expiries:4

Key Technical Levels:4

MNI Macro Insights:5

	Spot/Futures/Yield	Change (price), % or bps			One-month trend
		One-day	One-week	One-month	
EUR/USD	1.1443	-0.60%	-1.51%	-3.58%	
EUR/PLN	4.2736	-0.05%	0.13%	1.51%	
EUR/HUF	391.98	-0.10%	-0.14%	3.37%	
EUR/CZK	24.474	0.10%	0.39%	0.86%	
USD/ZAR	16.9048	0.63%	2.16%	6.01%	
US 10yr	4.2806	2.0	14.2	23.2	
Poland 10yr	5.735	9.5	19.8	80.3	
Hungary 10yr	7.307	11.6	32.7	78.0	
Czech 10yr	4.92	3.6	5.2	53.4	
South Africa 10yr	9.031	21.2	40.6	92.7	
E-mini S&P	6659.75	-0.27%	-1.25%	-2.78%	
EuroStoxx 50	5727	-0.30%	0.32%	-4.53%	
WIG	120436.58	-0.41%	-0.20%	-3.30%	
BUX	121255.45	-0.63%	-0.52%	-4.50%	
PX	2515.95	-1.14%	-2.95%	-4.76%	
FTSE/JSE All Share	114924.21	-1.73%	-1.42%	-4.69%	
WTI	95.97	0.25%	5.58%	52.94%	
Brent	101.22	0.76%	9.20%	50.87%	
Gold	5056.52	-0.45%	-2.23%	0.29%	
Silver	81.053	-3.33%	-4.13%	4.70%	

Upcoming Data Releases/Political Events:

Sunday 15th

Prime Minister Viktor Orban, Peter Magyar hold National Day rallies

- Prime Minister Viktor Orban promises to hold his largest-ever "Peace March", while his opposition rival Peter Magyar promises to fill a route from the main central square in Budapest all the way to the city park for his "regime-changing national march". The competing rallies will be held on the public holiday commemorating the Hungarians' 1848 uprising against the Habsburgs, and comes just under a month away from the April 12 election.

Israel February CPI (Est: +0.1% M/M, +1.9% Y/Y; Prior: -0.3% M/M, +1.8% Y/Y)

Monday 16th

Poland February core CPI (Est: +0.3% M/M, +2.6% Y/Y; Prior: 0.0% M/M, +2.7% Y/Y)

- The breakdown of February CPI data suggested that core inflation may have stayed close to the previous month's level, possibly ticking lower to +2.6% Y/Y.

Poland January current account (Est: -EUR 315mn; Prior: -EUR 1698mn)

Poland January trade balance (Est: -EUR 947mn; Prior: -EUR 2298mn)

Czechia February PPI (Est: -2.8% Y/Y; Prior: -3.0% Y/Y)

Czechia January monthly current account (Est: CZK 30.50bn; Prior: CZK 8.51bn)

Czechia January export price index (Prior: -5.4% Y/Y)

Czechia January import price index (Prior: -4.4% Y/Y)

South Africa Q1 BER inflation expectations (Prior: 3.7%)

- South Africa's two-year-ahead inflation expectations fell to a record low into the end of 2025, with the SARB taking it as evidence of success after the inflation target was adjusted lower to +3% Y/Y. The sentiment may have extended into 1Q26 but the onset of the war in the Middle East dims the outlook, with key market-based gauges of inflation expectations (5-year and 10-year breakeven rates) soaring amid the ongoing conflict.

Turkey February budget balance (Prior: -TRY 215bn)

Tuesday 17th

Turkey February house price index (Prior: +27.7% Y/Y)

Wednesday 18th

Poland March consumer confidence (Est: -9.4; Prior: -9.1)

South Africa February CPI (Est: +0.5% M/M, +3.5% Y/Y; Prior: +0.2% M/M, +3.5% Y/Y)

- South Africa's headline CPI may have eased closer to the SARB's +3% Y/Y target in February, as a further drop in fuel prices offered some relief, while a decent summer harvest may have helped offset the impact of the foot-and-mouth disease on meat prices. However, the outbreak of the Iran war reduces the relevance of the data, with the spike in the prices of energy carriers expected to show in the data in the coming months.

South Africa January retail sales (Est: +2.9% Y/Y; Prior: +2.6% Y/Y)


 **Russia February PPI** (Prior: -5.0% Y/Y)


Thursday 19th

 **Poland February average gross wages** (Est: +6.4% Y/Y; Prior: +6.1% Y/Y)

 **Poland February employment** (Est: -0.8% Y/Y; Prior: -0.8% Y/Y)

 **Poland February industrial output** (Est: +1.9% Y/Y; Prior: -1.5% Y/Y)

 **Poland February PPI** (Est: -2.4% Y/Y; Prior: -2.6% Y/Y)

 **CNB rate decision** (Est: 3.50%; Prior: 3.50%)

- The Czech National Bank is widely expected to keep the two-week repo rate unchanged at 3.50%, after several Bank Board members urged caution in addressing the fallout from the Iran war. While the domestic outlook has not materially changed since the previous meeting, the conflict is likely to delay any renewed discussion of a 'fine-tuning' rate cut for the time being.






Friday 20th

 **CBR rate decision** (Est: 15.00%; Prior: 15.50%)




- 20 out of 23 analysts polled by Vedomosti expect the CBR to lower its key interest rate by 50bps to 15% at its board meeting on March 20, despite the uncertainty caused by the conflict in the Middle East. Weekly inflation data look relatively benign and confirm that the January price surge due to tax hikes was temporary, whilst economists on average expect inflation to slow to around 5.2% by the end of the year.

All estimates via the Bloomberg analyst survey, as of 13/03/26

Bond Auctions:

-  **Monday: Israel to sell ILS 2.3bn of bonds**
-  **Monday: Romania to sell RON 500mn of 2028 bonds and RON 600mn of 2031 bonds**
-  **Tuesday: South Africa to sell ZAR 1bn each of 2038, 2044, 2053 bonds**
-  **Wednesday: Poland to sell bonds**
-  **Thursday: Romania to sell RON 600mn of 2035 bonds**

Notable Option Expiries:

-  **Monday: EUR/HUF 385.00 (E300mn)**
-  **Wednesday: USD/ZAR 15.70 (\$375mn), 16.00 (\$478mn), 17.00 (\$330mn)**
-  **Thursday: EUR/HUF 380.90 (E256mn), 388.90 (E254mn)**
-  **Friday: USD/ZAR 16.65 (\$404mn)**

Key Technical Levels:

EUR/PLN: In an extreme overbought zone

- RES 2: 4.3758 Nov 2024 high
- RES 1: 4.3102 Apr 2025 high
- PRICE: 4.2732 @ 15:30GMT 13/03/26
- SUP 1: 4.2337 50-day EMA
- SUP 2: 4.1936 Jan 28 low and bear trigger

EUR/HUF: Rally extends; 20-,50-day EMAs cleared

- RES 2: 410.98 Apr 14 2025 high
- RES 1: 400.65 61.8% retracement of Jan 2025 - Feb 2026 bear cycle
- PRICE: 392.25 @ 15:30GMT 13/03/26
- SUP 1: 383.45 50-day EMA
- SUP 2: 374.77 Feb 25 low

USD/ZAR: Bull cycle intact

- RES 2: 17.2825 38.2% Fibonacci retracement of Apr 9 – Jan 29 bear leg
- RES 1: 16.9183 Mar 9 high and bull trigger
- PRICE: 16.8953 @ 15:30GMT 13/03/26
- SUP 1: 16.3266 50-day EMA
- SUP 2: 15.8075 Feb 12 low

MNI Macro Insights:

— POLAND: Main Opposition Party's PM Candidate Pick Signals Shift to Right

During a convention held over the weekend, the main opposition Law and Justice (PiS) party unveiled the conservative ex-Education Minister Przemysław Czarnek as its PM candidate for the 2027 parliamentary election, signalling a nationalist pivot amid a growing threat to its previously hegemonic position on the right wing of the political scene.

- Czarnek was frequently mentioned as one of the likely candidates but was locked in tight race with several competitors. Just weeks ago, the media reported that MEP Tobiasz Bocheński would win the nomination, before the decision was reportedly reversed. Relatively unknown Stalowa Wola Mayor Lucjusz Nadberezny then emerged as front-runner.
- The choice is a blow to ex-PM Mateusz Morawiecki and his moderate-technocratic 'scouts' faction, which has been locked in a fierce conflict with the conservative-nationalist 'butterers' faction. Morawiecki ruled out quitting the party, but asked if he would like to be a Deputy PM in Czarnek's government, he answered 'not really' and refused to elaborate.
- PiS has been under pressure from two emerging right-wing parties, conservative-libertarian Confederation (K) and its breakaway ultra-nationalist faction Confederation of the Polish Crown (KKP). The former has proven capable of luring younger urban voters, while the latter has been making inroad into Law and Justice's strongholds among pensioners and in the east.
- PiS leader Jarosław Kaczyński told the catholic Trwam TV that Czarnek's task is to reach voters who are 'in the big tent of Polish right wing and Polish patriotic camp (...) we have to make this electorate aware that, firstly, we governed well (...) and, secondly, that if we consider the right-wing agenda, (...) our views are the same.'
- This suggests that the party is looking to focus on presenting itself as a better and proven alternative to right-wing newcomers and reasserting its position on this side of the political spectrum rather than cast its net toward the centre. However, Czarnek may also be a more palatable PM candidate should any of the Confederations decide to enter a coalition with PiS.
- This sets the stage for a short-term reignition of tensions on the right wing of the political scene, as key contenders are trying to secure the best medium-term bargaining position, as none of them is likely to be able to govern alone. Meanwhile, Czarnek as a PM would be expected to lead a more assertive, anti-EU government than the 2015-2023 PiS administration.

— POLAND: Governor Glapiński Pessimistic About Political Consensus Around 'SAFE 0%'

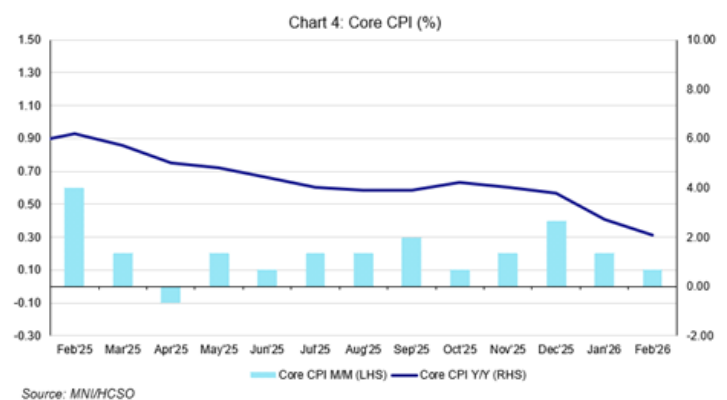
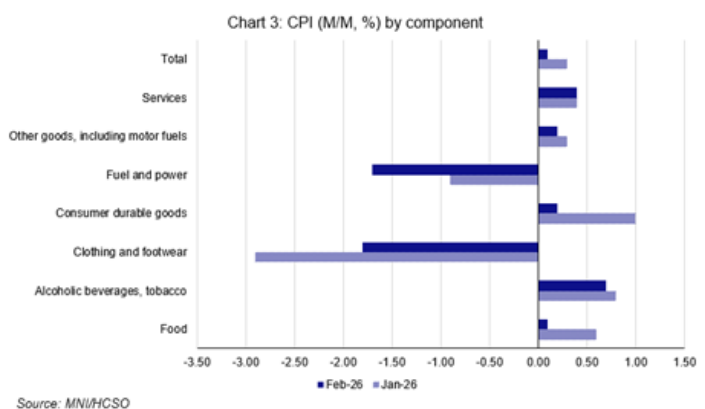
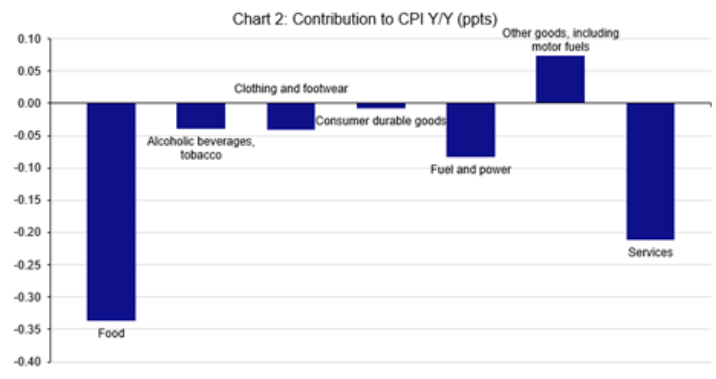
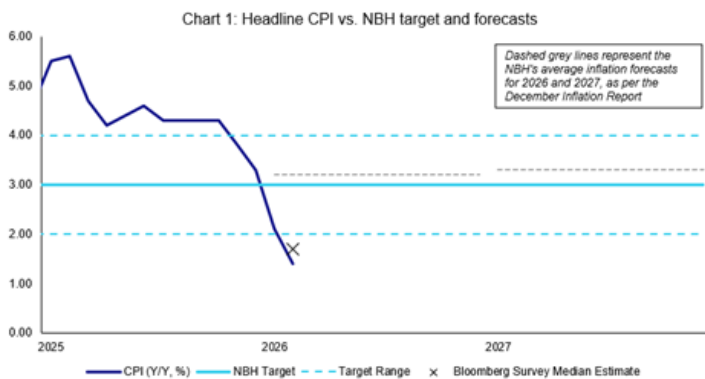
Governor Glapiński says that while the NBP's aggressive gold purchases were driven by geopolitical concerns, the side effect of the accumulation of the yellow metal was generating hefty unrealised profit to the tune of PLN197bn. He explains that without any action, this unrealised profit does not bring any benefit to the society, but suggests that there is little chance of the idea he proposed alongside President Karol Nawrocki coming to fruition.

- The Governor says that building a powerful army is a necessary condition of the existence of the Polish state over the long term. He says that 'the world is showing its ugly face' and the situation is unlikely to change within the next 10 years.
- Governor Glapiński says that considering this context, and the unrealised profits on gold holdings achieved thanks to the competent work of NBP's dealers, there is an imperative to use these profits to fund national defence.
- The Governor sounds downbeat on the prospect of reaching political consensus on the matter. He drops several such hints. He says that 'nothing will probably come out' of it and that his relations with the government were good enough up until this day.

HUNGARY: Headline CPI at Near 10-Year Low Amid Food and Services Softness

Annual inflation slowed to +1.4% Y/Y in February from +2.1% Y/Y in January, undershooting analyst expectations for a more modest decline to +1.7% Y/Y. This represents the lowest reading for the series in nearly a decade. Inflation came in softer than anticipated on a sequential basis as well, with consumer prices rising +0.1% M/M (Est: +0.4% M/M; Prior: +0.3% M/M). Meanwhile, core inflation – which excludes volatile food and fuel prices – eased to +2.1% Y/Y, down from +2.7% Y/Y previously.

- The 'Food' and 'Services' subcomponents contributed most to the decline in the annual figure, subtracting ~0.3ppts and ~0.2ppts, respectively. Weakness in these categories had been widely anticipated, reflecting strong and favourable base effects as well as the government's ongoing price-shield measures.
- On an annual basis, food prices rose 0.2% Y/Y, though they fell 3.2% when excluding eating-out prices. Household energy prices increased 4.2% Y/Y, driven by a 10.8% rise in piped gas prices and a 2.3% increase in electricity prices. On a monthly basis, food prices rose just 0.1% M/M (and were flat when excluding food and beverage serving services), while service prices increased 0.4% M/M.
- Prior to this release, analysts had expected February to mark the trough in year-on-year inflation, particularly in light of the recent spike in crude prices. As base effects fade, the annual rate is anticipated to edge higher from March. The NBH's baseline scenario is for inflation to remain below the 3% target in the coming months, before temporarily rising back towards the upper bound of the tolerance band.



HUNGARY: NBH to Provide FX Liquidity for Energy Imports

The Monetary Council says in a statement that it has reviewed economic and financial developments and decided to provide for the significant foreign exchange liquidity needs arising from energy imports. More below from the central bank:

- "In the current turbulent international environment, maintaining the stability of domestic financial markets, and in particular the foreign exchange market, is essential for anchoring inflation expectations and thus achieving the primary objective of price stability."
- "In the coming months, the central bank will directly provide the significant foreign exchange liquidity needs arising in connection with energy imports, taking into account aspects related to the adequacy of foreign exchange reserves. The targeted measure serves to create a balance between supply and demand in the foreign exchange market."
- "The targeted measure serves to create a balance between supply and demand in the foreign exchange market."
- "The Monetary Council continues to closely monitor and continuously assess economic and financial market developments and their impact on the inflation outlook, and maintains the cautious and stability-oriented monetary policy approach followed so far."

HUNGARY: Fidesz Narrows Tisza's Lead to 14 Points in New Poll

According to a new poll by 21 Research Center, published by 24.hu, Orban's Fidesz party has narrowed Tisza's lead to 14 points.

- According to the poll, Tisza's advantage over Fidesz is 8ppts among the total population and 14ppts among decided voters.
- The poll implies that Tisza would win 115 of the 199 parliamentary seats if an election were held this Sunday.

CZECHIA: CNB Say Increase in Global Price Pressures Warrants Cautious MonPol

The CNB have commented on the final inflation release (+1.4% Y/Y; Est: +1.4%):

- The main factor was the decline in food and alcohol prices, which brought overall inflation to its lowest level since October 2016.
- At the beginning of the year, the abolition of the fee for supported energy sources (POZE) on electricity prices was a one-off and significant impact. In February, an extraordinary drop in food prices was added, combined with a drop in the prices of alcoholic beverages.
- In the rest of the consumer basket, the overall price movement was no longer significant.
- Core inflation in February remained unchanged at 2.7% y/y. There is little change in trend.
- Inflation will be affected by rising oil prices in the coming months, but it could still remain below 2%. Core inflation will remain elevated near current levels, mainly due to services prices.
- Despite the previous very favorable development of overall inflation, increased core inflation and, more recently, an increase in global cost pressures represent reasons for caution in monetary policy.

CZECHIA: CNB's Seidler Says Rate Hike Talk Premature

- Bank Board's Jakub Seidler said that growth in service producer prices recently lost momentum, according to the slides from his presentation posted on the CNB's website.
- On the other hand, he noted that wages are still growing at a swift pace, with wage growth in services being stronger than in the rest of the economy. He expressed the view that discussions about potential CNB rate hikes were premature, while a discussion on rate cuts could resume if the Iran war eased.
- Meanwhile, CNB Monetary Section chief Petr Sklenář told ČT24 that the conflict in the Middle East could affect inflation but should not force the central bank's hand for now. He said that inflation is still expected to stay below the +2% Y/Y target in 1H26 and perhaps even in the second half of the year and the recent depreciation of the koruna was 'more of a cosmetic change'. In his view, despite the increase in inflationary risks, the economy was in a comfortable place.

SOUTH AFRICA: S. Africa Demarches US Ambassador Over His Combative Comments

The Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) summoned the new US ambassador and issued a démarche over the combative remarks he made in his first public appearance. DIRCO Director-General Zane Dangor said that ambassador Bozell expressed regret over his comments and signalled commitment to a constructive dialogue.

- Separately, the Presidency said that Bozell's 'thinly veiled threats' were concerning and advised him to familiarise himself with the country's laws. The ambassador subsequently wrote on X that 'the US government respects the independence and findings of South Africa's judiciary', backpedalling on his remark that he 'don't care what your courts say'.

TURKEY: MNI CBRT Review - A Hawkish Shift in Guidance

The CBRT kept the one-week repo rate unchanged at 37%, in line with analysts' expectations. However, a slight adjustment to the Bank's wording in its guidance paragraph lent the statement an overall hawkish tone, while also including extensive references to the conflict in the Middle East. Among sell-side, expectations are that the repo rate will remain unchanged in April, as the Bank could effectively ease financial conditions simply by resuming one-week repo auctions – without the need to implement a formal rate cut. On the other hand, a rate hike cannot be ruled out if the conflict in the Middle East shows no signs of de-escalation.

- The CBRT also left the bounds of the interest rate corridor unchanged, maintaining the 300bp spread between the one-week repo rate (37%) and the overnight lending rate (40%). As the Bank has already paused one-week repo auctions, financial conditions had effectively tightened by 300bps ahead of this month's meeting. This means the central bank could ease conditions next month without delivering a formal rate cut simply by resuming regular auctions. However, if the conflict involving Iran shows no signs of de-escalation, a rate hike cannot be ruled out instead, particularly given the sensitivity of domestic inflation to higher energy prices.
- The Bank delivered a notable hawkish shift in its forward guidance paragraph, removing its earlier easing bias from the policy statement.
 - March statement: "Monetary policy decisions are made prudently on a meeting-by-meeting basis with a focus on the inflation outlook."
 - January statement: "The step size is reviewed prudently on a meeting-by-meeting basis with a focus on the inflation outlook."
- See our full review, with a summary of sell-side views, [here](#).

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